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**TESTIMONY – Labor and Public Employees Committee Hearing
February 17, 2015
In SUPPORT of H.B. No. 5871**

Senator Gomes, Representative Tercyak and all distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee: I would like to thank you for your continued efforts on behalf of 900 public safety professionals and for taking time out of your busy schedules to review testimony in support of this very important bill.

My name is Glenn Terlecki and I am the President of the Connecticut Police and Fire Union. Our Union represents approximately State employees in law enforcement and firefighting professions. I am asking for your support in amending and passing: Raised H.B. No. 5871

"AN ACT CONCERNING WORKERS' COMPENSATION COVERAGE FOR CURRENT AND FORMER UNIFORMED MEMBERS OF PAID MUNICIPAL OR VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENTS."

This bill would provide adequate workers' compensation for current and former uniformed members of a paid municipal or volunteer fire department who suffer from certain diseases as a result of performing their jobs. Just as their brother and sister firefighters in the municipal or volunteer ranks, there are approximately 150 paid State firefighters that have the same potential for exposure to hazards and risks that may lead to debilitating and dreaded diseases. These firefighters are employed at various State agencies that include: The University of Connecticut, UCONN Health Center, Connecticut Airport Authority at Bradley Airport, Southbury Training School, the Connecticut Air National Guard, the Connecticut Fire Academy, Connecticut Valley Hospital and Central Connecticut State University.

I ask that this raised legislation be amended to include State firefighters.

The firefighting profession is a hazardous duty occupation unlike any other. The exposure to various chemicals and toxins is often unknown and will many times show no adverse side effects until years after contact. We as citizens entrust our firefighters with a great deal of responsibility. They have chosen a noble profession that protects us and keeps us safe; for that, we as citizens are very grateful. This legislation is now our chance to keep them safe and protect them.

I encourage you to support this legislation with my recommended amendment and thank you for your continued support to public employees.

Glenn Terlecki, President

Connecticut Police and Fire Union